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Nextgen launches Australia's first Virtual Private LAN Service

Michael Crawford 07 March, 2006 11:35

Australia's very first Virtual Private LAN Service (VPLS) is being launched tomorrow by Nextgen Networks, a wholly owned subsidiary of Leightons Contractors.

The carrier independent layer 2 VPN service features bundled bandwidth, end node VPN segregation and Quality of Service (QoS) profiles over three cost structures.

Essentially a fibre and rack space provider, Nextgen own a 2X route between Melbourne, Sydney and Canberra and a single route from Melbourne to Perth.

The company is packaging the offering as a national layer 2 VPN called National VPLS.

The service, without additional charges or carrier controls, allows customers to transmit data between meshed sites without traffic queues, distribute hosted applications when required and push end to end QoS profiles.

VPLS can connect multiple sites on a single domain over a managed MPLS (multiprotocol layer switching) with high bandwidth Ethernet.

Scott Ferguson, IT services manager with Nextgen parent company Leightons Contractors is using the service because it enables greater 'customer control' over the network rather than 'carrier control'.

"We wanted end to end management of the existing VPN and wanted to shake the controls of signing with an IP VPN carrier," Ferguson said.

"The multiple VLAN and QoS features solved the problems on both implementing and managing IP telephony and also delivers wireless in a secure manner around the network.

"The transition was easy as we mirrored the existing IP VPN infrastructure and then introduced multiple VLANs and interconnected the changes."

Ferguson said VPLS stood out from other IP VPN offerings in the market.

And while the parent company owns Nextgen, Ferguson said the offering really does stand on its own merits.

Nextgen general manager Peter Harrison said the VPLS service allows customers to control routing and most configuration options.

He said this is an important shift in moving data management control from the carrier to the customer.

"As it is an Ethernet service with feature bundling we can offer uncongested, unlimited national data usage as standard, end to end QoS and also include multiple VLAN's; in most cases as many as the customer can practically use," Harrison said.

The introduction of VPLS in Australia will eventually force the major carriers to introduce similar offerings, he added.

Telecommunications analyst Paul Budde said demand for VPLS in North America and Europe is huge and expects a similar rate of adoption in Australia.

IP VPNs have been available on the market since 2001 with the introduction of Metro VLANs in 2002.

Both offerings equalled a high degree of carrier control with surcharges on data value and network performance but the introduction of VPLS introduces a new level of flexibility and control for network administrators.

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